

MASSACHUSETTS RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS

SMALL BUR-REED

(Sparganium minimum (Hartm.) Fries.)

DESCRIPTION

Small Bur-reed is an aquatic, perennial herb. Its long slender stems are 4-24" (10-60cm.) tall, just reaching, the water surface or slightly emersed. The flat, dark green leaves are much elongate when floating and less than $\frac{1}{2}$ " (2-7mm.) wide. Flowers form small ball-like clusters, at the junction of leaves and stem; with 1-4 female heads, which are green and $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter; 1 male head, which is white because of all the stamens and separate from the uppermost female head. Flowers appear from late June to August; soon after the dull greenish or brownish fruits appear.



Britton, N.L. and N.A. Brown. An Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada. Dover Publications, Inc. 1970 reprint of 1913 ed.

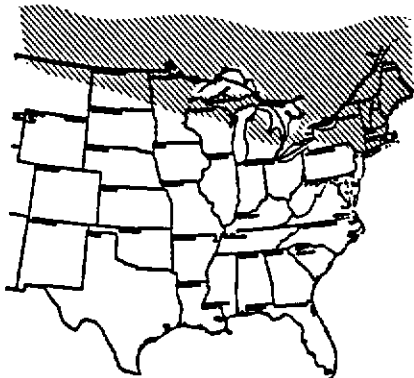
SIMILAR SPECIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

Six other species of Sparganium occur, but all of them have at least two male heads. Only the following two are also regularly submersed, with lax leaves. Narrow-leaved Bur-reed (S. angustifolium) has leaves semi-circular (not flat) in cross section. Floating Bur-reed (S. fluctuans) has very long (to 3') flat, floating leaves. The beaks of the fruiting heads are flattened in cross-section, not round as in other bur-reeds.

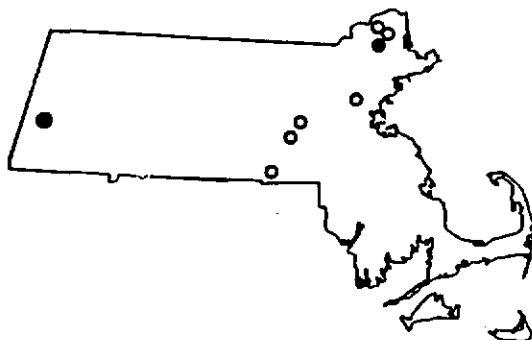
HABITAT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Small Bur-reed inhabits shallow water of bogs, fens, and ponds. It prefers alkaline waters. Species co-occurring with Small Bur-reed include Scirpus acutus (Hardstem Bulrush), S. subterminalis (Swaying Rush), Utricularia intermedia (Intermediate Bladderwort), U. purpurea (Purple Bladderwort), and Eriocaulon septangulare (Pipewort).

(continued overleaf)



Distribution of Small Bur-reed



● Verified since 1978
○ Reported prior to 1978

Distribution in Massachusetts by Town

SMALL BUR-REED (continued)

RANGE

Small Bur-reed ranges from Newfoundland to Alaska, south to New England, northern New Jersey, Michigan, Utah, and northern California.

POPULATION STATUS

Small Bur-reed is considered "Endangered" in Massachusetts. Only two occurrences from 1978 to the present are known; historically 7 other occurrences have been recorded.